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ABSTRACT

The author of this booklet discusses reasons for anger and ways of coping with it. When anger erupts in a classroom, it may be the result of cultural conditions that produce frustration and tension or adult-caused frustrations that could be avoided, such as rigid rules or lack of respect for the child. In discussing the characteristics of anger, the author stresses that anger may not be consciously recognized by the sufferer and that anger is cumulative and may suddenly "explode." The degrees of anger are discussed, and descriptions of anger's physiological effects are given. Guidelines are given for teachers and schools to follow in working with troubled children. Included are case descriptions of two children who were severe classroom problems. The point of view emphasized is that the origins of a child's anger must be understood intellectually to effectively plan strategy needed to help the child. A flexible approach to treatment, involving the child on both the cognitive and emotional level, is urged. A nonjudgmental, patient, and humanitarian approach is stressed in handling anger in children. (DR)

ANGER IN CHILDREN

CAUSES, CHARACTERISTICS, AND CONSIDERATIONS

by
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Introduction

Although the Department of Elementary/Kindergarten/Nursery Education invited me to write about the topic "when a child hates," I have focused largely on anger—considering the term *hate* to be an intense degree of anger, more extreme, pervasive, and prolonged.

It seems to be true that all of us get angry at ourselves or others at certain points, but rarely are we constantly angry at ourselves and others to the point of hatred. Hate in an individual is often a pathological emotional disturbance but not always. For example, to hate hypocrisy is hardly pathological.

Anger may be thought of as a redoubled energy. Like any energy—electricity, the atom bomb, and such—it may be used for constructive or destructive purposes, but it is not an evil in itself. The trick is to show the child how to keep his anger under reasonable control and how to use it constructively.

I am making these introductory remarks largely because we are dealing with an extremely complex topic, one in which our own personal value systems are involved; therefore, our reactions to and judgments of other people's acts and feelings become involved as well.

In the following pages, let us look objectively at this disturbing human phenomenon of anger, since it is so important in human living—in individual, interpersonal, and even international affairs. I believe that schools should make an effort to teach children what to be angry about and what to do about their anger. The purpose of this publication is to suggest some ways in which this might be done.

George Sheviakov
January 1969

CAUSES OF ANGER

In every classroom there is usually one child whose anger becomes a problem for the teacher. You know the type of child I am talking about. Too often he becomes upset and disturbed and distracting. You think you have him calmed down and then another explosion occurs. And you wonder what caused it. Was it something that you did as a teacher or was it something outside of the school setting over which you have little control?

It could have been one or the other or it could have been both. Let me explain what I mean.

Cultural Conditions

There is no question that we live in a different world and a different America today, than, let us say, in the 1920's. The tremendous increase in adult and juvenile offenses, the increase in the degree of violence, the completely unprovoked beatings by juveniles who do not even know their victims, the general insecurity of urban living, the indifference of bystanders when a person is attacked, and the ominous international tensions are all new phenomena in our lives.

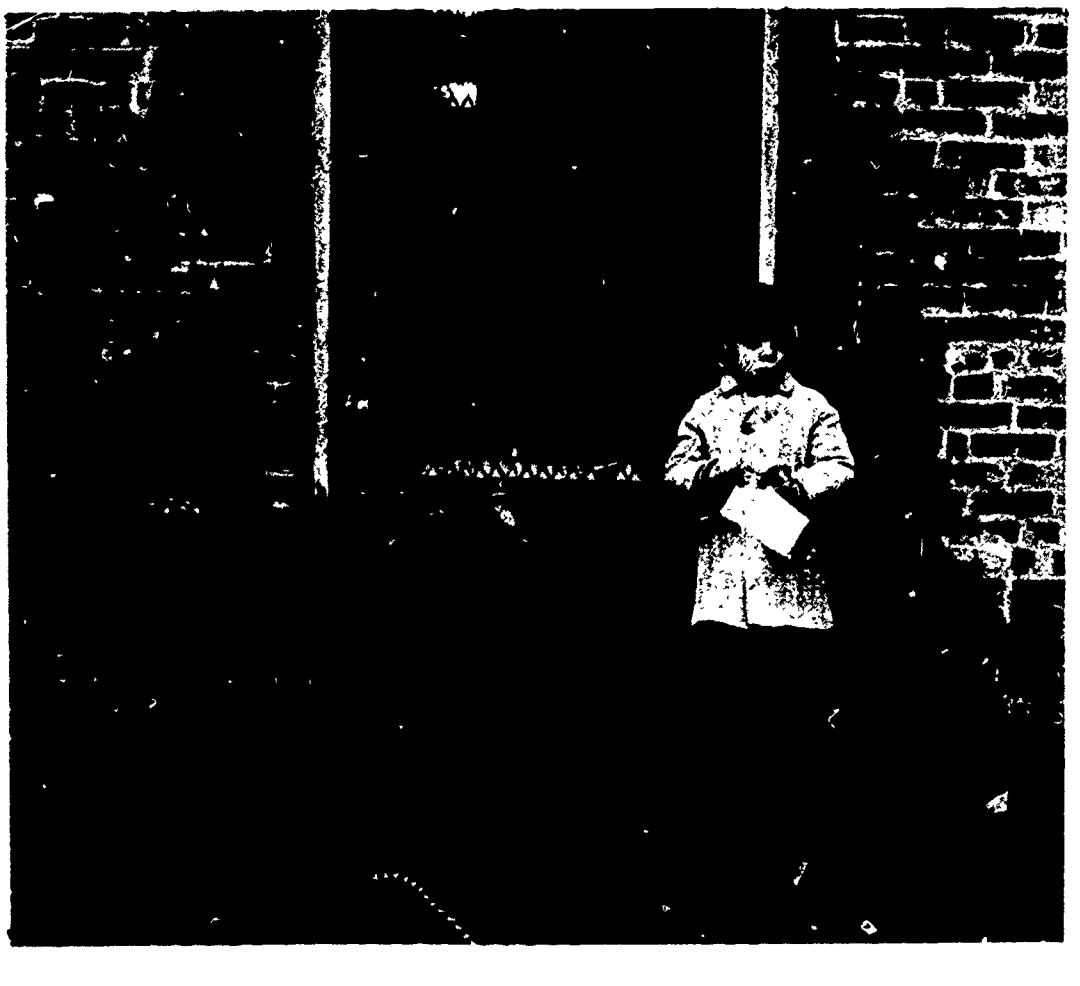
Undoubtedly these changes affect our children—frightening them and therefore making them angry and accepting of violence as a way of life for all people. All of us are aware that children are more affected by adult behavior than by adult preachings. We may cancel our postage stamps with a slogan that reads "Pray for Peace," but at the same time we practice wars of "pacification" that are brought into the homes of our children in living color. It is true that our "war babies" are in college

now, but the succeeding generation has been reared in a world where mass killing has not ceased to be a reality somewhere on this planet.

The various kinds of disruptions of family living are also a part of the angry world in which children are growing into adulthood. There are few meaningful activities in which the family can engage together. Adults seem to be too busy, and many parents seem to have lost the fun of playing or just talking with their youngsters. This seems to be true of all social classes of society—the socially busy or working mother, the busy physician or businessman, the examples could go on and on. A sense of loneliness is observed too often in youngsters.

The atmosphere of loneliness is created by the condensation and anonymity of urban living, which is not the healthiest of environments, especially in our large cities. Here we find a setting generally built for the profits of adults rather than health, recreation, and needed opportunities for children to explore freely.

Although the writer is neither an anthropologist nor sociologist, it appears to me that our society is one in which adult interest in the coming generation is very low, that the exploitation of children is very high, and that we are a society that does not particularly love children.



One of the results of this is the tremendous cleavage we see between the world of children and the world of adults—a cleavage that often results in actual mutual hostility and distrust.

We hear the ringing voices of children and youth crying:

"My mother doesn't love me!"
"What do you mean?" we ask.
"She loves me only when I'm good," comes the reply.
"My parents don't care for me," another shouts.
"What do you mean?" we inquire.
"They let me do whatever I want," the youth explains.

The post-Sputnik academic pressures on youngsters may be another serious contributor to children's anger. Learning in school has become loathsome to many instead of being a satisfaction of curiosity and a sense of growing competence.

These frustrations, anxieties, and sources of tension and anger in children are resulting in frightening developments. Many a pediatrician has told the author that high blood pressure and peptic ulcers, practically unknown in the past, have begun to appear with great frequency, even in very young children. The suicide rate has been increasing among children in the last decade. According to a recent article in the *Saturday Evening Post* (June 17, 1968), between 80 to 110 children and 500 to 750 adolescents commit suicide each year. These figures are bona fide established suicides and do not include cases officially listed as accidental.

Avoidable Causes

Children become angry when they are physically or psychologically threatened or when they are thwarted or frustrated in the fulfillment of their wishes. As children pass through the various stages of maturation, the situations and conditions of life which produce anger change. They become frustrated about new and different things.

Some of these frustrations in children's lives which lead to anger, however, are avoidable. Those of us who work with children need to know some of the frustrations which contribute to children's anger so that we can prevent them. Some of these avoidable causes are—

1. Lack of love or lack of respect
2. Rigid rules applied by an adult who refuses to consider mitigating circumstances
3. Overburdening the child by excessive demands or demands

that interfere with the child's other, legitimate activities (This is seen most frequently in overambitious middle-class families and in some classrooms.)

4. Lack of informal, friendly communication with the child through which the child can express his own true feelings (This is the opposite of the atmosphere created by the good child psychiatrist. It involves waiting for the time when the child accepts an interpretation of himself or his environment and is the opposite of "setting the kid straight right then and there.")
5. Loneliness, not having a single pal
6. Lack of opportunity to experience success or satisfaction, even in an area we adults regard as unimportant
7. When a child strives to do something not within the range of his ability or power
8. Revoking a privilege previously allowed, not as a necessary protective measure but as an arbitrary action taken without being sure that the child understands the reasons
9. Lying to children *in any form* (This makes the adult untrustworthy and from the child's point of view "not with him.")
10. Living in fear of parents and teachers (Fear and anger are not only identical in their physiological reactions, but they activate each other. Thus, whenever we are afraid, we also become angry. The severity of fear and its constancy is an important factor in making a youngster chronically angry.)
11. A grim home or school life that does not include occasional fun and laughter and having a good time together.

This writer is not recommending the removal of all frustrations. Frustrations are part of life and children need help in learning how to cope with them. With help, the child can gradually learn to tolerate greater and greater amounts of frustrations, but this is accomplished gradually. Some well-meaning parents and teachers seem to believe that "it is good for the child's soul to pile frustrations on him." Many children "crack up" under the burden, become hostile, and are less able than ever to cope with frustrations.

Although there may be one single cause of anger, severe or chronic anger is more often the result of an accumulation of several anger-producing factors in the child's life. That's why it is imperative that we try to discover what these factors are. At times one can change the environmental conditions without directly trying to "change the child."

CHARACTERISTICS OF ANGER

In examining the characteristics of anger, two important considerations must be stressed.

1. *Anger and anxiety may or may not be consciously recognized by the sufferer.* More often his feelings are repressed into his unconscious, and he is not aware of them. The indoctrination of children in our society against being angry or fearful is so strong that children deny to themselves their true inner feelings. Since the energy is still there, its outlets may take many different paths.
2. *A peculiar feature of anger is that it can accumulate in a manner similar to the accumulation of electricity in a battery that is being charged or steam pressure in a boiler.* This accumulated anger may not be visible at all, but it may express itself in roundabout ways or in a sudden violent explosion. At least once a year we read about a "model" boy who has committed a shocking crime. We also see it in quiet, shy people who occasionally "explode" emotionally in response to a trivial provocation. Anger is taboo in our culture, but this does not extinguish the energy within the body.

As we look at anger in a more analytical manner, let us examine in this section the various degrees of anger and the physiological effects of anger on the human body. This knowledge will help us to be more alert in detecting hidden anger, in understanding this complex phenomenon and getting hunches concerning how to help the angry child. For instance, a child who expresses his anger freely and openly but who does not hurt

anybody may not have a heavy burden of anger; whereas a "mousy" child or a nonlearner may have a heavy load of anger.

Degrees of Anger

The *extremely hostile*, furious, and vicious child is an extremely disturbed individual who is beyond the help of the school. Such a child needs 24-hour supervision and psychotherapy. Since he is too sick for the school, he does not profit from it and actually poses a danger to others in the class. Referral to a social agency is necessary for a child with this degree of anger.

Indirectly expressed anger within a child is revealed in his perennially pessimistic view of life: "Well, I hope nothing happens to you on this auto trip." "Are you well? You look somewhat pale." "Yes, she is a wonderful girl, but isn't it too bad that she has buck teeth?" The list is endless. This sugarcoated hostility may be unconsciously directed toward a single person, it may express a high degree of hostility within the child in general, or it may be a form of atonement, which is not real atonement at all because the child frequently does express his hostility in other ways. Some children develop headaches or other genuine physical symptoms that are really meant to enslave the family or spoil its fun.

With *internalized hostility* the target may be the child himself. Usually such reactions spring from punishment for expressions of anger or from great guilt feelings about one's hostile feelings, sometimes causing self-hate. The range of actual behaviors is very broad. Here are a few: Banging one's head against a hard object (an expression of impotent rage), cutting oneself, biting one's knuckles, managing to have "accidents," shying away from other children (thus becoming a recluse), having difficulty in talking to others (perhaps for fear of ridicule or inadvertently expressing one's hostility), avoiding competitive situations (because winning may mean an act of aggression, although entirely different feelings may be expressed through fear of competition, too), being apathetic or depressed, managing things so that other children dislike you, having an unconscious desire to fail, plus an endless list of psychosomatic symptoms, such as vomiting or stomachaches. All these may enter into the expression of anger. These are all complicated human reactions that may be caused by several factors and may have several meanings at the same time. It is this complexity, not oversimplified explanations, that I wish to stress here.

Projection of one's own hostility on others is another common phenomenon that expresses itself frequently in "Nobody likes me," "The teacher is picking on me," "Kids in this school are very unfriendly."

(This one hears from both children and teachers.) We like to blame others for our troubles. It relieves us of guilt and responsibility.

Displacement of anger is another important phenomenon to realize. Many times a teacher may have trouble with a child because of the teacher who taught him in the previous period. I have known children who hated all boys or girls as a displacement of their hatred of their brother or sister—a hatred often based on jealousy or envy. A number of children give their teacher a bad time one way or another based on their anger at their parents against whom they would not dare to express their anger. This works the other way also. A child who is "good" in school but who fears and hates his teacher may be a hellion at home. Parenthetically, this is one of the many reasons why it is important for parents and teachers to get to know each other.

Physiological Effects of Anger

While anger, fear, and anxiety are psychologically different, the human body reacts to them in identical ways. But even though the physiological reactions are similar, great individual differences exist in bodily functions and psychological reactions.

The main point is that anger, although usually initiated by psychological factors, is essentially a physical reaction. The equilibrium of the bodily functions may be disturbed in a variety of ways. Thus, when we try to talk to an angry child, we must remember that we are talking to a person whose body and mind are in an abnormal state. Practically speaking, to try to "reason" with children who are angry is futile, since whatever we say is perceived and reacted to in a very different way than when the body and mind are in a normal state. This is why there should be a "cooling-off period" for both sides in a dispute.

Generally speaking, the pituitary gland dominates the activities of the other glands. In an emotional state, the adrenal glands become especially active.

Some of the body's physiological reactions are as follows:

- The heartbeat increases, the blood pressure rises, and blood vessels contract.
- Breathing becomes deeper to supply the body with more oxygen.
- Adrenaline is released to give the body greater energy and strength.
- Blood rushes to the periphery, resulting in blushing and greater muscular strength. However, some children go pale or ashen in anger, indicating that the blood leaves the body surface. When blood is rushed to the periphery, digestion stops or is interfered with.
- Some physiologists claim that liver releases stored-up sugar, thus giving a child greater strength when angry.
- The contraction of blood vessels may affect the functioning of the brain, since the oxygen supply becomes impaired. This phenomenon is complicated by the factor of individual differences. For instance, in anger and fear some people become completely irrational, while others seem to think faster than normal.

Although we should not make hard and fast generalizations from the above, it is safe to say that in anger or fear the child is *not himself.* It is also safe to say that prolonged or chronic anger may produce serious body damage such as high blood pressure or gastric ulcers.

Are some children genetically more apt to become angry? This is still debatable. However, Dr. Fritz Redl's experiments with "impossibly angry children" and the equally remarkable work of the University of Chicago's Dr. Bruno Bettelheim with truly extreme cases of disturbed children certainly are most encouraging and suggest that these children were not "born that way."

CONSIDERATIONS CONCERNING ANGER

I realize that the substance of the preceeding sections may be extremely disturbing to many readers. Some people may disagree with me and be annoyed by what I say. They may feel I am "robbing" them of the delusion that hateful children are not just "bad" but suffer from a variety of injuries, injuries over which one can at least put a psychological band-aid, greatly alleviate, or even "cure."

I know that these extremely vexing children tempt us to retaliatory actions, after which we rationalize and say, "He deserved it!" I also know that many classroom teachers work under impossibly difficult situations where they are prevented from using their wisdom, either by the community, the board of education, or administrators.

On the other hand, I do believe firmly that the schools can do a tremendous amount of good for troubled children. To illustrate some ways in which the schools might carry out this responsibility, let me share with you two personal experiences, comment on these cases, and then suggest several specific ways of preventing or reducing anger in children in your school or classroom.

Peter, a Boy in Need

Peter was in our kindergarten in the campus school. I was a member of the faculty and the school's counselor-at-large. One day the principal came to me and complained about Peter. "He's just impossible," the principal said. "I hate to expel him, but the teacher is at her wits' end. She's an excellent teacher and a very patient young woman, but Peter is too much for her. Yesterday he locked her out of the classroom. Can you come over and give us some help?"

I told the principal that I would like first to observe Peter in the classroom and then talk with him. He said the sooner the better.

When I entered the classroom, the teacher pointed Peter out to me, but this was hardly necessary. He definitely stood out! He was a handsome, husky kid moving rapidly about the classroom bumping into everybody and acting belligerently toward some of the boys. Yet when a few of the boys tried to move a heavy box, he was right with them, working cooperatively.

When milk was distributed, however, he proceeded to knock the cups from the hands of several youngsters. Then when the teacher bent over to help the children clean off the table, Peter sneaked from behind and gave her a resounding slap on the rear. When the teacher, flushed with embarrassment, turned around, Peter grabbed one of her hands with both of his, almost pleading for love.

After my observation, I asked the teacher's permission to see Peter the next day. Peter seemed happy to make an appointment with me, although we had never met.

The next day I arrived with a lot of toys in a cardboard box. Peter was an angel alone with me. He played for an entire hour. What seemed to fascinate him most were trucks, airplanes, a traffic officer on a motorcycle, a toy man, and a little boy. He put the toy man and boy side by side.

When the hour was over, I asked Peter to put the toys back into the box. With great care, he lined up his favorites and neatly put them away. I asked him if this was all the toys, and he said yes. Then I pointed out the two remaining figures, a toy woman and girl. When I asked him about the others, he replied, "Oh, them?" I nodded. He

threw the figures into the box and went back into the classroom.

That afternoon I saw his teacher and she seemed very upset. "What did you do to him?" she asked. I explained that we had merely played games. "Well, he was worse than ever," she replied.

I told her that I appreciated her difficulty in having such a child in her classroom and explained that something must have happened to the feelings of the child to cause such behavior. I encouraged her to use all of her patience.

All in all, I had about fifteen sessions with Peter—once a week for an hour. We played with toys, played simple games, and I drew pictures for him. On the third session, Peter suggested that we have lunch together. I asked him what he wanted, and he placed a simple order of peanut butter and a few other items. When I brought them the next week, he jumped up and got from his locker one sandwich of just bread and butter. He broke it in half and gave me my half. I thought: "This is what you call a real breaking of bread."

During the twelfth meeting, while I was drawing, I felt Peter leaning against me. I made it comfortable for him. Like a kitten, he climbed on my lap and put his head against my right arm. I had to stop drawing so I could hold the child in both of my arms. We were silent for two or three minutes and then Peter slid off. We finished playing our games. Then he put away his toys and went back to class.

That afternoon, the teacher came to my office asking again what I had done. I described the incident. She said that after the session with me, Peter was an entirely different child—pleasant and cooperative. He even asked to serve milk to the children. I was very elated by her visit.

I saw Peter three more times. His behavior in class continued to reveal a more comfortable relationship with the teacher and the other children. At the final meeting I explained to Peter that I was very busy and would not be able to see him regularly any longer, but that I had a friend who would come by to see him after school once a week. I arranged for one of my educational psychology students to see Peter as a course-related activity. He played ball with Peter, took him to the nearby park, and did such things that young boys usually do with their fathers.

For you see, Peter's father vas a flyer who had been killed in World War II. He lived with his mother and a rather cantankerous grandfather who spent very little time with his grandson. Since his mother had returned to college to earn her degree, she also had little time to spend with her son.

I had known this background information. That's why I *never* talked with Pete about school, about himself, or about his home. The therapy was not on the cognitive level. I just supplied the boy with what he needed—a temporary father. Once his needs were met, some inner change in his unconscious structure of feelings took place

and his outward behavior changed, too.

Peter is the only completely "pure" case of this kind I have ever had, but it taught me a profound lesson from which you may profit as well.

Jim, a Boy to Remember

I first met Jim when he was in a nursery school in California. Since he was one of the children in a longitudinal study of child development in which I was participating, we were destined to see each other for many years. He was a husky, blond, blue-eyed, curly-haired fellow with an abundance of energy. He too moved like a fast tractor, but was friendly and cheerful with children and adults. He had a wonderful smile and sparkling, "tricky" eyes. We became friends at once.

Through the next five years, I saw Jim usually about twice a year as part of our study, and our friendship grew. Early in Jim's year in fourth grade, I received a phone call from his mother. She was desperate because her son had become a terrible problem in school and at home—fighting everybody. The school did not know what to do with him, neither did his parents. Naturally I told the mother to send Jim to me.

When Jim came in for his first interview, he was surly and obviously very angry. He would not talk the way we used to talk and was not interested in any games. The session lasted about fifteen minutes. He delivered choice profanity, threw a block at me, which I dodged, then spat in my face and stormed out saying that he would never see me again. Before he slammed the door, I said, "Jim, I will see you next Thursday at the same time after school."

Perhaps because of pressure from school and his mother, Jim did come again on the next Thursday. He stayed for a whole hour, but he was almost incoherent because of his rage—face flushed, tendons in his neck strained and tight, shouting, instead of talking. Very little was accomplished.

As part of my work with Jim, I decided to place him with a virile and active Boy Scout leader who took his troop on rough trips. I realized that Jim's home environment was his main problem. He had a weak, hypochondriacal father and a frustrated, provocative mother. I thought his relationship with the Scout leader could be a very important factor in changing his feelings about himself and life.

The next Thursday, I decided to take Jim out. First we went to a little ice cream place. As we were served, Jim called the young waitress a bitch and threw the ice cream at her. I apologized, paid, and we left. From there, we went to a western movie. Jim could not look at the screen, but instead dashed around and threw women's purses and men's hats up in the air. I crouched in my seat. Finally I walked up to Jim and told him that we had better drive home. He complied.

Such chaotic behavior lasted for several weeks. Jim did come regularly, but it was impossible to talk to him or to engage him in any game for any length of time. I wondered if I were accomplishing anything.

Then one day when Jim came in I could see at once by his posture, general demeanor, and smile that he was the old Jim. He sat down, and we played some simple games, told jokes to each other, and talked about simple things.

Finally, I could contain myself no longer and said, "Jim, what the heck is the matter with you today? You act the way you used to act." Jim gave me one of those inimitable smiles and said, "Oh, you are my pal."

I returned his smile and asked him how it was in school today. "The same," Jim replied. "I was sent to the principal again and he told me to go home."

"How was it at home?" I asked. "The same. I got everybody mad."

I then changed the subject to more enjoyable things, but I realized what had happened to Jim. He was still a hellion, but he could smile and talk about his behavior now because he was *aware* of what

he was doing and knew that I was accepting it. With this new awareness of the type of person he had become, he was able within a few months to have more control over his behavior in his other relationships. Eventually, his behavior became more acceptable to the school and to his parents. He also discovered that this new behavior toward people was much more rewarding.

Many years later, I happened to see Jim in a market. He was wearing a Navy uniform and helping his mother carry the groceries. We were glad to see each other. Jim said he was fine and that he had not gotten into any trouble in life as many people had suspected he would the year he was in the fourth grade.

"Do you remember what a bastard I was when I was little?" Jim asked.

"Jim, I will never forget you as long as I live," I answered without hesitation.

He gave me again one of his wonderful grins, and we parted.

There is much more I could discuss about the dynamics of this experience with Jim, but this is not within the province of this publication. The thing I want to stress, however, is that basically nonpathological children, like Jim, and perhaps even more deeply disturbed children can be helped only through endless patience and understanding. I know of no other way.

Realistically speaking, very few schools and communities have the facilities to aid youngsters like Jim. Even in his case, it took a lot of pleading with the principal and the parents to leave Jim alone for awhile. In so many cases we only make the Jim's worse by the things we do at school.

It is difficult to describe the therapeutic process that was employed with Jim. In general, I tend to avoid talking about unpleasant things unless the child brings up something. I also usually avoid "giving insight" or interpretations since I want the child to "discover" these himself.

Upon reflection, I believe my success with Jim came about because he discovered that at all times I was accepting him as he was, no matter what, and that I did not intrude by asking questions or "setting him straight." This, I think, helped Jim eventually to feel completely at ease with me and to talk about himself.

When Jim and I reached this comfortable relationship, I would occasionally say, when appropriate, "You don't seem to really dislike your teacher" or "You like to get people mad, don't you?" or, while playing a game, "Jim, you are really a very smart kid!" Jim would grin and agree with these comments which would have been completely inappropriate for me to have made during the early weeks of our relationship.

Comments on the Two Cases

The two cases of Peter and Jim, probably dramatic in symptoms and improvement, are presented here not as clichés, panaceas, or as patterns to follow. The problem of "hate-full" children is much more complicated than in the illustrations given. Yet I have learned a great deal from these two cases and wish to make some suggestions to the reader based on these experiences.

- The person dealing with the "hate-full" human being should brace himself against the trap of becoming counterreactive in a "hate battle" between himself and the individual. The "hate-full" individual often wants to engage us in just such a battle, but this is a blind impulse on his part.
- The "hate-full" individual has to come to see the person who is trying to help him not as another "enemy," but as a person who calmly accepts the person's feelings, which are genuine and true at the moment. This is bound to take some time.
- The "hate-full" person should be allowed all the time he needs to get hate out of his system so that other feelings which exist in him, however dormant or repressed, can emerge.

- The "hate-full" person needs help to discover that other means of self-expression can bring about undiscovered gratifications.
- Those dealing with the "hate-full" human being must become deeply convinced that the person is inwardly suffering as a result of injuries inflicted upon him, not as a result of inherent meanness or a desire to hate oneself and others.
- A socially injured human being cannot accept himself or others until he has been unconditionally accepted *as he is* by another human being. This to me is the essence of personal and social rehabilitation. I have seen this on all levels of human development, young and old.

Suggestions for School and Classroom

Let's now turn our thoughts to ways in which those of us who work with children can prevent or reduce anger.

1. First, look at *yourself.* What are your attitudes toward angry children? What are your reactions? If in doubt, discuss your attitudes with a competent person such as an older, more experienced teacher, the school principal, the school psychologist or psychiatrist, but not someone you know will agree with you. Don't talk to a "title," but talk to a person with whom you feel comfortable and whose thinking you respect. This certainly should give you insight into your reaction to anger in children.
2. Take a close look at the points listed under "causes of anger." What can *you* do or avoid doing?
3. Speak out for the assignment of a full-time counselor and access to a social worker for your school.
4. If you are an administrator or supervisor, function more as a consultant to teachers, not as a person whom teachers fear. Fear in teachers produces anger in them, and inevitably the children suffer.
5. Provide opportunities for children to work off their anger through sports, debates, and games and by the teacher's allowing children to express their anger verbally.
6. Encourage freewheeling discussion of how all of us get angry from time to time and without preaching help youngsters to see how some expressions of anger get people into further trouble. The teacher should also emphasize that other expressions of anger can be harmless or even constructive.
7. Promote harmony with your group by arranging situations that are fun and bring the group together!

8. Use humor as much as possible, not by clowning, but by encouraging the class to laugh together. The mere physical process of laughing automatically neutralizes anger. As Dr. Murray Banks put it: "Laughter is the sunshine of the soul."
9. Be well-organized. This will convey to children that you know what you are doing and that what the class is doing is important. Research has shown that a well-prepared teacher reaches even the resistant children. Being well-organized, however, should not be confused with being rigid or authoritarian.
10. Individualize the learning activities in your classroom as much as possible so that they will be meaningful to each youngster.

11. Stress individual progress, as opposed to some arbitrary, absolute criterion.
12. Rather than being fault finding, praise the child for each bit of good work or effort.
13. Don't "over-love" your children. They know that this is phoney and may take it as a weakness or a form of bribery.
14. Learn more about your angry children and their parents through informal chats and conferences.
15. Never be sarcastic with a child in the classroom.
16. Somehow, *indirectly* show faith in your worst children. This is terribly important.
17. Have as varied a program as possible—movies, tapes, illustrative materials, field trips, outside speakers, reports by individuals or committees, and so forth. Nothing is worse than having the same program format all the time, no matter how good it is.
18. Treat every child with respect. Eventually they will return it to you.
19. Be natural and yourself. Don't play a role. Kids see through it. Even show your anger when you feel it; but after you have cooled off, explain the reasons for your anger to the children.
20. Remember that rehabilitation is a very slow process and may take several successive teachers to achieve it.
21. If it appears that you are not getting anywhere with the child, don't blame yourself. Some problems are beyond us. If we do not injure the child further, we are helping him.
22. Have the inner fortitude not to be influenced by what other teachers think of you. Your first obligation is to the children you teach.

In this publication I have tried to present a certain point of view: that we must try to understand *intellectually* the origins of a child's anger in order to plan the strategy needed to help the child. I have also tried to emphasize that we should work with the child not only on the cognitive level, but on the emotional, unconscious level as well.

If I have sounded dogmatic, I apologize. I know only too well that there are *many* approaches, and throughout my professional career I have used many varied techniques. I am not pleading for one set way of working with angry children, but a flexible approach suited to the treatment of each child. I still insist, however, that a nonjudgmental, patient, and humanitarian approach is the safest and most promising way to handle anger in children.

Resources for Further Study

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. *Growing Up in an Anxious Age*. Yearbook. Washington, D.C.: the Association, a department of the National Education Association, 1952. 260 pp.—The fact that this book was published in 1952 does not make it obsolete. The same excellent contributors would say essentially the same thing today, only perhaps more vigorously since the anxious age has become more anxious.

Long, Nicholas J., and others. *Conflict in the Classroom*. Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1965. 515 pp.—A truly fascinating book—original in organization; full of practical suggestions; and an artistic, sensitive publication.

Ostrovsky, Everett S. *Children Without Men*. Revision of *Father to the Child*. New York: Collier Books, 1962. 188 pp.—A sensitive and penetrating analysis of the child's need for contact with men as well as women. The author is a former nursery school teacher. We must remember that many upper-middle-class children who live under the same roof with their highly educated fathers are nonetheless "children without men."

Redl, Fritz, and Wineman, David. *Children Who Hate*. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1951. 253 pp.—A scholarly although easily readable book, quite humorous in part. Recommended not so much to the classroom teacher as to counselors and school psychologists. This is probably the most authoritative book on this topic since Dr. Redl writes not only from deep, theoretical understandings, but also from his intimate work with angry children.

Redl, Fritz, and Wineman, David. *Controls from Within*. New York: Free Press, 1965. 332 pp.—An excellent book that penetratingly analyzes the problems of building inner controls *versus* blind obedience. Those who are interested in the depth understanding of the problem will profit greatly from this publication.

Redl, Fritz. *When We Deal with Children*. New York: Free Press, 1966. 511 pp.—A compilation of Dr. Redl's outstanding articles. Parts 4 and 5 are especially relevant to our topic.

Wittenberg, Rudolph M. *Adolescence and Discipline*. New York: Association Press, 1959. 318 pp.—A surprisingly little-known book. The title is misleading since the book applies equally well to younger children. This book presents principles in the setting of everyday, practical problems and should be "must" reading for every teacher or administrator.

About the Author

I was born January 3, 1901, in St. Petersburg, Russia. Although my parents were highly educated, my childhood was miserable. I was sent to the classical European Gymnasium where, besides all the sciences, mathematics, and so forth, we had to *really master* six languages. Unfortunately, English was not one of them.

I was a very poor student, had to repeat a grade in junior high school once, and was a constant visitor to the office of the principal. Visiting the principal's office was such a stupid procedure because it exempted me from the hateful classroom, but it happened so often that the principal's secretary and I became very good friends.

Each day after school, I was usually punished for my behavior by being made to stay an additional hour—doing nothing. This gave me an hour daily to plan how I would annoy the teachers the next day. I think it was then that I began to think about the stupidity of our schools and of the adults who operate them. Yes, I'm sure it was then.

After the Bolshevik take-over and the civil war started, I joined the "White Army" at seventeen. In two years we were licked by the Soviets and were ordered to surrender. I was decreed to be shot, but half an hour before my appointment with the firing squad I managed to escape. My experience as a delinquent finally paid off. Eventually I made my way to Manchuria where I stayed until the fall of 1923, when I decided to travel to the United States of America.

For the next two years I worked as an unskilled laborer and boned up on my English. By 1925 I thought I was ready to try a university and was accepted by the University of Washington in Seattle. In 1927 I transferred to the University of California at Berkeley where I majored in psychology and philosophy.

In 1929 I got my first job as a psychologist in a longitudinal study at the University of California, and it lasted seven years. We were studying babies and their families. The case of Jim is from that study.

In 1936 I received a two-year fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation. This took me to New York where I became affiliated with a study of adolescents. My job was to work with kids who were out of work. I remember well the weekly seminars where I became intimately acquainted with Dr. Caroline Zachry, Fritz Redl, Peter Blos, Erik Erikson, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and many others. It was there that I decided to work in the area of public schools.

My personal history from that time on is too complicated to record here in detail. I worked for five years at the University of Chicago doing research, teaching summers, and serving as counselor-at-large at the laboratory school. I was also consultant to the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges, which took me many, many times to the schools in the Deep South. Oh, how many good things I learned there from kids and their teachers.

When World War II broke out, I went to Oregon as assistant superintendent of schools in charge of guidance in a temporary community for shipyard workers, recruited from all over the United States. I stayed there almost two years and then returned to Berkeley where I saw my research babies, now in their adolescence. In half a year I got a job at San Francisco State College where I stayed until I decided to retire.

So you can see that since 1938 I have been in close contact with teachers, kids, and parents. ("Kids" includes college students.) I have enjoyed my adult life, and I am enjoying my retirement plenty, although I still enjoy occasional consultations with groups of teachers. I miss contacts with kids, however, but at my age I don't have the energy that it takes to work with them properly. You know what I mean.

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